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THE length of our Birmingham Correspondent's communications must absolve us from our accustomed leading article this week. Our review and many interesting foreign, provincial, and miscellaneous paragraphs are also unavoidably postponed till next week.

BIRMINGHAM MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

(The following letters arrived in succession last week, from our correspondent.—Ed. M. W.)

Queen's Inn, Birmingham,
Monday, Sept. 18th.

DEAR WORLD.—I have little to say to you to-day. At the rehearsal this morning I was struck with the unusual excellence of the choir—an event, in a great degree, attributable to the exertions of Mr. Surman, who undertook the double task of drilling the London chorists (chiefly selected from the members of the Sacred Harmonic Society), and the Birmingham singers. A certain portion of the profession is up in arms against Mr. Surman and the amateurs; but in these days such complainings are all stuff—the public will have the cheapest and the best of every thing; they care not a straw how it is procured. If an amateur sing better than a professional, and will take less money (or nothing at all), the amateur will be employed and the professional sent about his business; moreover, there are other reasons, which it is not in the province of a musical journal to discuss, and which the management of the festival alone can fully explain. These are the days of railroads, steamboats, balloons and daguerreotypes; those who grumble had much better be employed in endeavours to improve, so as by ultimate superior excellence to defy competition. Wonderful are the things to be purchased now at a cheap rate: why, then, should the public be compelled to accept mediocrity at a dear one.

The principal vocalists engaged at the Festival

are Miss C. Novello, Miss Rainforth, and Mrs. Knyvett, (*soprani*); Mrs. A. Shaw and Miss M. B. Hawes, (*contralti*); Messrs. Manvers, J. Bennett and Signor Mario, (*tenori*); Messrs. Phillips, Giubilei, Machin and Signor Fornasari, (*bassi*). To the engagement of Mario and Fornasari I strongly object: the latter, I am sure, has no idea whatever of the sacred style of music. The band is made up of forty-two violins, twenty-four violas, sixteen violoncellos, twelve double basses, four flutes, four clarionets, four bassoons, four oboes, four horns, four trumpets, four trombones, one ophicleide, one double ditto, one bombardon, drums, &c., in all one hundred and eleven. The choir consists of two hundred and fifty, which, added to the band, and counting a reinforcement of about forty amateurs, makes up a number of about four hundred, *in toto*; one hundred less than a full performance at Exeter Hall. Dr. Wesley has been wisely engaged as organist, and will be assisted by Mr. Stimpson; Mr. Knyvett has been foolishly engaged as conductor, and will be assisted by Mr. Munden, who will turn over for him, a duty for which I should have thought Mr. Knyvett much better qualified than for that so absurdly assigned to him. The operas at the theatre will be under the direction of a Mr. Tully—from Gravesend, I believe. The Queen Dowager will not come as was anticipated. The town is not over full, but the facility presented by the railroads will account for that circumstance. As I shall give you a detailed account of the events of each day, I need say nothing at present about the order of the music to be performed—so good bye till tomorrow.

Your's ever,

S—.

P.S.—To night the whole of the music intended for the evening's performance will be rehearsed! Once, however, will be enough to endure such a heap of trivialities—I shall not, therefore, attend—nor is it, indeed, necessary, any more for your information than for my own amusement.

Birmingham,

Tuesday Night, Sept. 19th.

DEAR WORLD.—The Town-hall was well filled for the first performance. Previous to the *Stabat Mater*, which stood foremost in

the programme, we were regaled with a most intolerable piece of twaddle in the shape of a new version of "God save the Queen," entitled, "*Viva Victoria*." The music is one of the commonest tunes of Rossini, and the words are—but, judge for yourself:

Britons rejoice, unite heart and hand,
Sing of her name in Freedom's fair land,
Viva Victoria!
Long may she live, long may she reign,
Long may she be our gracious Queen,
Viva Victoria!
Tell of her laws, Oh tell of her fame!
Freedom's the cause she crowns with her name,
Viva Victoria!
Long may she live, long may she reign,
Long may she be our gracious Queen."

Thus you will see the words are worthy of the music, which is not only a remarkably vulgar air, but villainously harmonised. The *Stabat Mater* was then gone through; and taking all things into consideration, very effectively. I am tired of reiterating my exceeding dislike of this silly profanation. To my ears, it sounds like a very feeble opera of Bellini or Donizetti (which latter's *Misere-re*, by the way, is a much less absurd production). Rossini, with all his affectation, must be thoroughly disgusted at the lavish encomiums, pronounced by foolish critics, mad pianists, and half educated composers (Paris abounds in such) on this, the very stupidest work of the many very stupid works that have proceeded from his pen. He cannot surely be dull enough to swallow such ill-placed adulation with any self-satisfaction. I have not many remarks to make with regard to the performance of the *Stabat*. The best singing was, beyond a comparison, that of Miss Rainforth, who looked more pretty and more intelligent than ever. Her delivery of the *Fac ut portem* was artist-like in all respects. This is one of the most tolerable *morceaux* in the entire work, and I liked it the better for being sung by the charming Miss Rainforth. In the duet, *Quis est homo*, she, as well as her compeer, Miss Clara Novello, (who, by the way, was *coiffée* to admiration,) made the best of such a trivial matter—though the latter lady indulged her thirst for display, to admiration. However, in such a piece as the *Stabat* of Rossini, it is much more entertaining to laugh in our sleeves at the amusing eccentricities of popular vocalists

than to listen to the music—and so I had a great treat, I can assure you. Mario was quiet and correct in all he had to do—much more to my liking than Rubini, I must confess, but still a trifle Italianish, which, however, was not out of character with the music. Fornasari was as dull and dreary, as though he had been singing in his sleep, which suited his *role* admirably, especially in that most atrociously unpleasant of all bass songs, the *Pro Peccatis*, which, for its clumsy harmony and uncouth transitions, yields to nothing I have ever heard. How strangely this vocalist is overrated! Miss Novello, in the *Inflamatus*, (which is well named, being a veritable musical inflammation,) exerted herself to the utmost, but could by no means pierce through the meaningless howl and hubbub of the accompaniments. The choruses were all well sung—indeed, far better than they deserved—the *fugue* in the *Amen* always makes me laugh, till it comes to a certain passage near the end, when it makes me groan. Do you think it will do to gain Rossini admittance into Mr. George French Flowers' "*Counterputist's Society*?"

The selection from *Deborah* came quite as a relief, and roused me from the lethargy induced by the *Stabat*. How much better to have given the entire work, which, from its rare performance, would have been a great attraction. I have not much to say against the selection, except that the stupid custom of allowing singers to introduce extraneous compositions was indulged in to a large extent—four or five songs, not in *Deborah*, being introduced. It really surprises me that directors, who know how vain and foolish are the majority of vocalists, will consent to leave any discretionary power in their hands, to spoil and maltreat the finest works of the greatest masters; which, when they can, they invariably do—it puts me out of all humour for music when I cannot listen to a great work as it has proceeded from the hands of the master who wrote it—and thus, in a considerable degree, what might have been a rare treat was rendered common-place and uninteresting. Who, for instance, would give one doit to hear Mrs. Knyvett drawl through "*Pious orgies*," which, in its right place, would be an infliction, but out of it, is an absolute nuisance? Miss Hawes won great applause, which was expressed without hesitation, by her fine delivery of the air "*Lord, to thee each day and night*." The parts in *Deborah* were distributed as follows: Miss Clara Novello, *Deborah*—Mrs. A. Shaw, Barak—Miss Hawes, and Mrs. Knyvett, Israelitish women. Mr. Phillips, Abin-sam—Mr. Giubilei, a priest of Baal—Mr. J. Bennett, an Israelitish man. The choruses, magnificent in themselves, were, if possible, rendered more than magnificent by the manner in which they were delivered.—"Now the proud insulting foe," came out with marvellous effect. Sir Robert Peel was expected, but it appears now that only Lady

Peel will come. However, I will not trouble you with fashionable arrivals, but, leaving that to the *Morning Post*, will confine my remarks to the music. Mr. F. Cramer, I forgot to say (nothing having put me in mind of it), led the morning performance. I suppose I must undergo the infliction of the *Lady of the Lake* to night, for your satisfaction—but I don't promise, mind that.

Adieu—yours, &c.

J. S.

Birmingham, Wednesday,
Sept. 20.

DEAR WORLD.—Had you been at the theatre last night, you would have been greatly amused. When I except Miss Rainforth and Mr. Giubilei, I have excepted all I can conscientiously except from censure in the performance of Rossini's *Lady of the Lake*, according to the English version. It cannot amuse you much to read a detailed critique on so stale a work, I shall therefore let you off with a few remarks. Mr. J. Bennett was persuaded (against his inclination, having resigned the stage,) to enact the part of the King. Mr. Manvers played Roderick Dhu, and the other characters were sustained by their usual London representatives. Mr. Bennett was loudly encored in *Aurora che sorgerai* (better known as "*Oysters, Sir*")—and Mrs. Shaw and Miss Rainforth were similarly complimented in their duet. The choruses were tolerably well given, but nothing to boast of. The costumes and decorations were unworthy of Richardson's show. After the Opera, a miscellaneous selection of vocal and instrumental music was performed, which displayed some good features. Fornasari, who is much more at home in dramatic than in sacred music, (forgive me for applying the term *sacred* to the *Stabat*), sang *Non piu Andrai* so well as to obtain a tumultuous encore. Beethoven's *Adelaide* was given by Mario well enough, but, being accompanied by the orchestra, in lieu of the piano, was, in a great measure spoilt. There were other good things in the programme, but I have only time to mention the delicious trio from *Azor* and *Zemira*, which called forth the abilities of the female constellation of stars—and the *Tu e ver*, from Mozart's *La Clemenza*. Miss Clara Novello attempted *Una voce poco fa*, which piece of threadbare trumpery has, seemingly, been taken into favor by vocalists, who give it in all manner of keys, and with all manner of alterations—why, I cannot define. Miss Novello should never sing music of this kind—her voice, beautiful as it is, with regard to quality, is by no means a supple one, and in passages of execution, fails her entirely;—indeed, for a reputed first-rate singer, Miss Novello has less power of execution than any one I have heard. Loder led the band, which gave two overtures by Romberg and Weber, with great spirit. The theatre was remarkably thinly attended.

This morning's performance at the Town Hall commenced very gloomily with one of the dullest works ever composed—the *Palestine* of Dr. Crotch. Any thing more stupid than the subject of this oratorio it were difficult to imagine; no wonder, therefore, at the uninteresting nature of the music. What vexes me is, that the claims of Great Britain as a musical nation; are so frequently assumed to rest on the shoulders of this heavy uninspired production, which really appears to me to have little or no merit whatever, even as a work of elaboration, much less as an inspiration of genius. I was absolutely astonished to find that the harp and trumpet *scena*, which on one or two occasions I have endured with such impatience, as a necessary conventional infliction, at the concerts of the Philharmonic, was one of the least sleepy things in the entire work. But it pains me to speak thus of the work of an English musician of high reputation; and as I will not say to you what I do not think, and as I can say nothing in any way favourable of *Palestine*, I shall hold my tongue and say no more. The vocalists who dragged through the work as well as its heavy weight would allow them, were Miss Clara Novello, Miss Rainforth, Messrs. Phillips, Machin, Manvers, and Bennett. They were all unexceptionable in what they had to do; but I must particularise the two ladies, and, (in the redoubtable *scena*), Mr. Phillips, who were admirable. The miscellaneous selection, of which the following is the programme, came upon me like the sun from behind a cloud after the desolate dreariness of *Palestine*.

Solo, Organ, Dr. Wesley.....Wesley.
Coronation Anthem, "I was glad".....Attwood.
Aria, Signor Fornasari, "*Date son-nitum*".....Costa.
Trio, Miss Rainforth, Signori Mario, and Fornasari, "*Et incarnatus*".....Cherubini.
Air, Miss M. B. Hawes, "*Holy, Holy*".....Handel.
Corale, "*Wake, O wake!*".....Martin Luther.
Air, Mr. Shaw & Chorus, "*Eternal God*".....Beethoven.
Recitative and Air, Mrs. Knyvett, "*Angels ever bright*".....Handel.
Sestet, Miss Rainforth, Miss Hawes, Mrs. Shaw, Messrs. Bennett, Phillips, Machin, and Chorus.....Dr. Croft.
Aria, Signor Mario, "*Ah te fra tanti*".....Mozart.
Air (accompanied) "*In splendour bright*," Solo parts, Mrs. Knyvett, Messrs Bennett and Machin, with Chorus, (*Creation*).....Haydn.

An excellent selection, it will readily be seen. Dr. Wesley's organ performance was magnificent, and created an immense sensation. I have not the least hesitation in affirming that Dr. Wesley, as an organist, has no rival now living, except Dr. Mendelssohn—and it would be difficult to decide between them as to their respective merits. Attwood's anthem is a dull affair, but went off uncommonly well. Signor Costa's air is one

of the worst things we ever heard in the worst school that was ever known; and the singing, or rather bawling, of Signor Fornasari, was in admirable keeping—(another glaring instance of the bad results of leaving singers to select their own music.) Cherubini's delicious trio (from his celebrated mass in F) was ably sung, and pleased universally. Miss Hawes is an immense favourite here—her "Holy, holy" drew down irrepressible manifestations of satisfaction, not wholly unmerited, but somewhat extravagant, considering that she delivered the air nearly half as slow again as Handel intended it. At all times a somewhat somniferous composition, it is really "tolerable and not to be endured when thus hyperbolized." Luther's Corale is solemn, if not striking, and was well delivered. The fine air of Beethoven suffered somewhat from the singing of Mrs. Shaw, but indisposition was her excuse. Dr. Croft's *sestet* is a dry composition—a very dry composition—an exceedingly very dry composition, &c. Mario gave the lovely *aria* of Mozart with exceeding purity of taste and execution. The selection from the Creation was out of place, and by no means required. The hall was not so fully attended as on Tuesday morning—but what could be expected with such a half-and-half attraction as the programme presented. Till to-morrow,

Your's,
S—.

Birmingham,
Thursday, September 24.

DEAR WORLD,—*Norma*, stupid as it is, drew a large concourse of people to the Theatre last night. The acting and singing of Miss Novello created a multitude of differing opinions, some pronouncing the fair vocalist a Kemble, others levelling her with the second, and even third raters. My opinion, you already know, lies in the *medius rerum*.

I think her neither great nor small.

As a finished vocalist I must unhesitatingly give the preference to Miss Rainforth, whose impersonation of Adalgiza, was last night, as usual, one of the sweetest and most irritable things possible. If this interesting young singer continue thus to charm our ears and our understandings, we shall positively, all of us, be over head and ears in love with her! and if that happen to me, dear World, you will have to answer for it, since, but for you, I should not have been here, within the sphere of her attractions. Manvers and Giubilei were both admirable, especially the latter. The opera was only done in a mutilated form;—so much the better—the more omitted from such a work, the more satisfactory such a work must be to every musically cultivated mind. A miscellaneous selection, which followed, presented some few good things among a heap of frivolities. The good things were the

overture to *The Isles of Fingal*, well played (and not at all comprehended)—a *trio* from *Zauberflöte*, charmingly rendered by Mrs. Shaw, Mrs. Knyvett and Miss Rainforth—Bishop's Glee, "Blow gentle gales,"—and Mozart's "*Dove sono*." Among the frivolities were several Italianisms by Mario and Fornasari, and other tritenesses too tedious to particularize. Fornasari was encored in "*Miei Rampoli*." Mrs. Shaw was greatly applauded in "*Non piu mesta*"—and Mrs. Knyvett sang "*Auld Robin Gray*," while Miss Rainforth was in the room. I am pressed for time, and can say no more about this concert.

The *Messiah*, this morning, attracted (as usual!) the most numerous auditory of the Festival. To speak of this immortal work were a superfluous labour—suffice it the singers were Mrs. Shaw, Miss Rainforth, Miss Hawes, Mrs. Knyvett, Bennett, Giubilei, Phillips, and Machin. I must mention one particular; Miss Maria B. Hawes, at the end of "He was despised and rejected," which she sang very impressively, (but much too slowly,) was so exceedingly affected, that she was compelled to leave the orchestra, which produced quite a sensation. One word more—the choruses were *gigantic*, and the band did its duty nobly. The only remarkable fault of the performance was the constant trick of taking things by many degrees too slow, which, imperceptibly at first, but palpably as it proceeded, threw a tedium over the whole. For this the conductor is quite as responsible as the singers, who should be restrained in the exercise of this liberty, so fatal to the interest of the work, and should not be permitted to sacrifice the *Messiah* at the shrine of their vanity and love of display:

A demain,
Your's,
S—.

Birmingham,
Friday, September 22.

DEAR WORLD.—There was a hodge podge of good and bad at the theatre last night, which attracted but a very indifferent assemblage. The best things were decidedly two overtures of Weber and Mozart, splendidly executed by the band, and that of the latter the unrivalled *Zauberflöte*—loudly encored. Mr. Knyvett conducted the band, and was himself led by Mr. Loder, under whose care things luckily went well; otherwise, amid the fury of Weber and the passion of Mozart, I am inclined to think Mr. Knyvett would have been in *nubibus*. Glees by Webbe and Horsley, were ably sung by the principal vocalists. Trios by Rossini and Cimarosa, were no less efficiently delivered by Miss Novello with Mario and Fornasari, and by Miss Rainforth, Miss Novello and Mrs. Shaw; the latter especially, the popular "*Faccio un inchino*," (from the *Matrimonio*

Segreto) was given to admiration and applauded vehemently. The duet "*Senza tanti complimenti*," which, without hyperbole, I may safely say I have listened to at least a hundred times, was effectively given by Mrs. Shaw and Fornasari. Of the vocal music, however, the best features were incontrovertably Mario's "*Il mio tesoro*," a chaste and admirable performance—Fornasari's "*Non piu Andrai*," conceived and executed with infinite spirit—and the round from *Fidelio*, beautifully given by Mrs. Shaw, Miss Rainforth, Giubilei and Mario. Mr. Phillips sang a dismally dreary yarn by a certain Mr. Callcott, and a "deadly-lively" ballad, called the "Lake of Killarney." The latter was announced in the programme, but Mr Phillips substituted the former, and consequently, after he had achieved his laborious task, the latter being called for (the auditory imagining that a song about a "Lake," could not possibly be *dry*) we were regaled with two inflections in the place of one, which was too bad—but the affair gave rise to some fun from the awkward predicament in which it placed the assistant conductor Mr. Munden, who, having been deputed by Phillips to explain, commenced explaining, and ere he had explained why and what he was deputed to explain, was jogged on the elbow by Mr. Phillips himself, who immediately struck up the "Lake of Killarney," with which explanation the audience were more than satisfied. But enough of this hybrid concert.

The last performance at the Town-hall, this morning, consisted of a miscellaneous selection, which, from its comparatively in attractive character, was not calculated to draw, and did not draw many visitors. By far the most interesting feature in the whole was Dr. Wesley's unrivalled performance on the organ, one of the most extraordinary specimens of pedal playing we ever listened to. He chose the noble air, "Ruddier than the cherry," for his theme, and rendered it admirably subservient to his purpose. To those who had never heard this great organist, it was well worth the journey to Birmingham to listen to his masterly performance. Fornasari sang wretchedly this morning: in fact he has no conception of sacred music whatever, and ought not to attempt it. I trust he will never again be engaged at any Festival in this country. Mario was again excellent in one of the charming arias of Mozart. Mrs. Shaw gave the exquisite air from *St. Paul*, "The Lord is mindful of his own," much too flat. One thing, however, I must commend; in general this air, which does not finish, but leaves off on a half close on the dominant, is sung, at concerts, without the charming chorus which immediately follows, and is an essential part of it: but, on this occasion, either the vocalist, or somebody for her, (the latter is more likely of the two—few singers know a half close from a full close,) had the chorus affixed, and thus rendered the compo-

sition complete as only it should be sung, if the dictates of musical propriety and common sense are to be listened to. I recollect, on one occasion, last year, Dr. Mendelssohn expressed to me his surprise and displeasure at the mutilated performance of the song which I have spoken of. To a musical ear it is the most unsatisfactory possible effect: this, again, is to be traced to the selfish vanity of singers, who like to have all their own way, and object to the division of the attention of an audience with the choir, which, when the song of which I am speaking is properly performed, must necessarily be the case. Among the best things in the programme were Miss Rainforth's "With verdure clad," a charming performance; Miss Novello's "Limpid Streams," and the "O Salutaris Hostia," (Cherubini's somewhat hacknied air) of Miss Hawes; these were absolutely unblameable in all respects. Mr. Bennett sang "Gentle Airs," very well, but the absurd cadenza of the violoncello threw the whole thing into ridicule. I cannot conceive why such exhibitions are tolerated now. There was nothing else remarkable.

On the whole, I consider this Festival the most thoroughly disgraceful, as a matter of art, that ever occurred in Birmingham, if not, indeed, any where else. Except the *Messiah*, not one morning programme was even creditable. I at least expected to have heard the *Paulus* of Dr. Mendelssohn, or one of the oratorios of Dr. Spohr, under the conduct of one or other of the illustrious composers; but instead of these to be regaled with such works as the *Stabat Mater* and *Palestine*, under the direction, moreover, of such a conductor as Mr. Knyvett, was really too much for any one's patience, however inclined to gloss over the faults of the powers that be, for the sake of the charity to which the profits of the Festival are applied. As for the evening concerts at the theatre, when it is considered, that with such resources, both vocal and instrumental, not one of the symphonies of the great masters was performed, not one concerto, not one chorus or concerted piece of any magnitude, one cannot but be disgusted as well as disappointed. I am sorry to preach in this vein, but justice demands it. The stupidest thing of all, however, was the performance of *bad English versions of bad Italian operas*, and this at the grand musical festival of a wealthy and populous town like Birmingham—one of the commercial emporiums of the world! Moreover, and worse still, these bad versions of bad operas were advertised as the *chief features of interest in the proceedings* of the Festival. Pray give us your opinion of the matter—you are a better hand at administering castigation to the musical sinner than I am. Adieu, Yours, S—.

* THE CONTRAPUNTIIST'S SOCIETY.

To the Editor of the "Musical World."

DEAR SIR—I have read with surprise a letter inserted in your journal, signed, "A Lover of Coun-

terpoint." I would have given the writer credit for his signature, had it gone to show the *advantages* of Counterpoint, and tended to prove that a man cannot be considered an *accomplished musician* without a practical acquaintance with it.

I should be sorry to belong to a society where a "sonata" was the test of talent, for, musicians with very little study, might write a "sonata;" this, therefore, would not encourage science to any great extent, but this would not be the case if a "fugue," were required from a Candidate. A "sonata," from the pen of an *unaccomplished musician* would have few "poetic" charms to recommend it, in the opinion of the true musician.

I see no use in establishing a "Sonata Society," so long as the "British Musician's Society" is in existence; it would be an insult to propose such a thing. It is to be regretted, however, that in that society, members should be admitted into it before they have half finished their musical education, and still be allowed to produce compositions before they are thoroughly acquainted with the science they wish to develop; and that many of their members pay large sums to the copyists to get their music written out; and too often their attempts prove a source of greater mortification to themselves than their audience. If, however, this society would insist on each candidate doing such an exercise as I have proposed for the "Contrapuntist's Society," then there would be no occasion to form a new society; in fact, I should be exceedingly glad to drop my project if that society would take this matter into consideration, for it would be preferable in every respect, and I should escape that *very charitable insinuation* of your correspondent, by not being the "*would-be-founder*" of the "Contrapuntist's Society," an honor I do not wish to aspire to, provided the same advantages were to be met with in any existing society. I should not have replied to your *anonymous* correspondent's letter, only I thought it would further the cause of the Society, and prevent *personal* disputes; this being altogether a question of science, in justice to me, may I ask of you not to insert any more letters on this subject, unless the writer give up his name. I cannot suppose, Mr. Editor, that your correspondent means to insult me, nor do I know what I have done to a lover of "counterpoint" to deserve it, yet the tone of his letter is less complimentary than an *anonymous* writer ought to have indulged in. He may suppose others will read his version of my proposed exercise as he has done; but I rely on the better sense of the readers of your journal to give me credit for no such downright ignorance. Who could suppose I meant that "the subject must be heard 150 times in each bar;" does my language imply it? and if so, as "a lover of counterpoint," and a friend to the "notion" I have proposed, he ought rather to have corrected my oversight, and not have made it the tool for displaying his *powers of logic*. Your correspondent knows that it would be impossible to place the subject "150 times in each bar;" he, therefore, should not indulge in nonsense, for it is losing time to read it, and no one will consider him a wit for his contrivance, or trust such a man for their lawyer or their friend. The limits of a letter will not allow me to "explain what a fugue may happen to be," but, as "a lover of counterpoint," your correspondent most likely knows, for he must have written fugues, at least as exercises for the development of counterpoint, but if he has studied the works of S. Bach, he will find that the exercise I have proposed was not considered by him a "mechanical drudgery," or "extravagant, if not nonsensical proposition." Mr. Editor, your correspondent is no prodigious monster to be feared; there are reasons to believe that he is not yet full grown, and insignificantly replying anonymously to one who gives up his name does not lessen my belief. His attack upon my fugues is of no importance, since I will challenge him to compose better ones, provided he will give up his name;

and till he has proved himself my victor, I shall neither envy his talents, nor fear his opinion. Pope says,—

"Let such teach others who themselves excel,
And censure freely who have written well."

It is easy to give out the subject of a fugue, and answer it, then give the Dux and Comes, and afterwards harmonise bits of the subject, and introduce old-fashioned sequences, either by subtraction or addition, and thus patch up a fughetto. But, to continue, a strict fugue, in which the counterpoint is constructed for the subject only, is, as those who are in the habit of writing fugues know, to be a very different thing, and is more difficult to compose; this your correspondent felt when he said, "let the fugue be left to the *fancy of the writer*, and even then the society would not be overburdened with members." Does not this prove that counterpoint is neglected in England, and that "sonata" compositions do not teach this important branch in the science of music?

No partiality and distinctions could be made in the "Contrapuntist's Society" in favour of any particular member; this is what I am anxious to avoid, and, as to myself, I have no desire to hold a more prominent position in the society, nor judge of the candidates any more than your correspondent would do were he a member. In a future letter, with your permission, Mr. Editor, I will further develop my ideas on this subject.

I agree to only one suggestion of your correspondent, which is, that "Contrapuntist's" is preferable to "Counterpunctist's Society," and I only wish that I could gather more "wheat" than "chaff" from his letter. Friend Contrapuntist, it is such literary "chaff" and spiteful reproaches as you have descended to from which I wish to separate myself. Sir,

"In every work regard the writer's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend;
And if the means be just, the conduct true,
Applause, in spite of trivial faults, is due."

I should have hailed with delight good arguments, but uncalled-for personal attacks prove—what? Any thing but *sound sense* and *good breeding*. By endeavouring to show that I "entertain an exalted opinion of my own abilities," and accusing me of pedantry, and affectation of erudition, and impressing upon the public that I cannot compose an "unobjectionable fugue," (which is *false*, and when his name is announced, I may prove him incapable of judging, is doing no good to the cause (he owns is just), any further than it shows how much feverish language ought to be avoided in others. I earnestly request that he will no more wage paper war with me under that unlucky title, "a Lover of Counterpoint," but like a man step forward to prove in his *own name* his right to question the talents of his brother professor, who is *really* anxious that true merit, wherever it may be found, should meet with its reward, and that no unkind feeling should exist in the profession, for this never puts a penny more into a man's pocket; and that that injurious system of cliquing together should be put a stop to, and that the world may have a sure testimony of a man's proficiency in the theory, by proving from a scientific exercise that he has not neglected any important branch of his profession, but has, at least, laboured to merit the patronage of the public, and the esteem of his profession. True knowledge is not found in shuffling language, and in the spiteful mind, but in him whose practice only proves his cause is just, and his talents clear.

Let no man talk of the "poetry of music" till he has furnished his mind with science, and can do any exercise imposed on him. There is not a man in England who has not to make up in theory what Mozart possessed naturally, yet he is known to have studied very hard every branch of the science of music, and his works, whether in the strict or *free* school, powerfully evince his

knowledge in counterpoint, which makes his music full of invention, poetry, melody, and harmony; and I believe that no free compositions will live after a man who has not displayed in his works a thorough knowledge of counterpoint. A man ought to be careful, therefore, how he speaks on this subject, for many there be, who, with a quarter of Mozart's genius, do not feel that science is their only protector, and in proportion as they are born with less genius, so with humility, industry, and delight, they should assist the talents given them, by studying science, which will expand their intellects, and lay before them a storehouse of knowledge and beauties, which otherwise they could never have known.

If your correspondent can propose an exercise which shall effect the object I have in view, I shall not be envious of him in the slightest degree, but be most happy to adopt his suggestion, provided it will be a severe scientific exercise, but on no other proviso. I hope, Mr. Editor, that you and your constant readers, and the profession generally, will unite with me in rejecting equivocal exercises for the furtherance of science and counterpoint; and, in conclusion, every man ought to thank the editor for the publicity he has given to a subject which tends to raise our profession; and in the mean time allow me to subscribe myself,

Your's very truly and obliged,

GEORGE FRENCH FLOWERS, Mus. Bac., Oxon.
3, Keppel Street, Russel Square.

P.S.—I might have said, your correspondent appears to write DOUBLE counter-point to me, and I now invite him to make simple counterpoint with me as ingeniously, which would have been imitating him in his more successful attempts at punning. Your correspondent says, "I must confess, I hate all pedantry and affectation of erudition in music;" and Mr. Flowers especially, who has published some fugues full of equivocal points, should be the last man to indulge in a display of it. Query, Mr. Editor, ought I not in this case to be the first "man to indulge in pedantry and affectation?" I wish he "hated" personal abuse, then he would have confined himself to the merits of the question.

CHOPIN'S ESSAY.

To the Editor of the Musical World.

Blackheath, September 22d, 1843.

SIR—The "Illustrated London News"—a species of *Punch* without its wit,—has been very severe on this remarkable effusion. I enclose you the criticism entire, for the edification of your readers:—

"AN ESSAY ON THE WORKS OF FREDERIC CHOPIN."

He was a mighty poet, and
A subtle-souled psychologist.—SHELLEY.

This is surely the production of some enthusiast, who, thinking himself "nigh spher'd in heav'n" by the adoption of a balloon (we mean inflated) style of composition, the very worst desecration of a goose quill we ever met with, has beaten Macpherson hollow; for if Goldsmith thought that the *soi-disant* translator of "Ossian" deserved the severe line of

Macpherson write bombast and call it a style!

what would not this 'professor of "verbosity and froth" deserve at the hands of any body who has a respect for the purity of his native language? Gentle reader! judge of the author's manner yourself: we give an extract:—

'We now come to the "Tarantella." Op. 43, which, for sparkling animation and deliciously characteristic gaiety, has no competitor among the smaller works of Chopin. We can liken this charming sketch to nothing so appropriately as to one of the delicate pictures of our English Uvins, by whose pencil the tarantella has been so often rendered poetical, in the purest sense. As we proceed with the "Tarantella" of Chopin we are gazing all the while, mentally, on the canvass of Uvins, and our doubt

is solely with whom to adjudge the preference—a doubt which merges into a certainty of the absolute and entire equality of painter and musician, a greater compliment than which could scarcely be paid to either. The piece is in the key of A flat major, of itself a new feature; for, till now we never heard of a "Tarantella" in other than a minor key. However Chopin shows us that he can render the major mode as supple and bendable as the minor—as *tarantellish* and twist-about-able—as mournfully gay and sparkingly melancholy—the true characteristics of that singular national dance. The time is *presto*, and the theme, in melody as simple as the first axiom in mathematics, is rendered piquant and *apian* by the assistance of the most tasteful, savoury, and palate-tickling harmonies conceivable. The course of this simple *melos* lies through a world of evolving progressions—among the intricacies of which it is conducted on the supple shoulders of a rolling accompaniment of light-footed triplets which bear away their delicious burden with all the delight of a lover carrying his mistress to the world's end—anon caressing it, and kissing it tenderly—anon coquetting with it, and leaving it to its own guidance—anon rushing back to it as rapidly

'As comets to the sun'—

anon embracing it, and hugging it with close amplexitude, exemplifying mystically the arcana of *psychical anastomosis*—the synarthrics of intellectual comprehension—till joyfully and fleetly they bear it to the end of its journey, on the wings of an irresistible and inflammable pedal passage, which is enough to lift you off your feet with bare excitement. We could play this "Tarantella" for ever; and yet—ought we not to be ashamed to confess it—until we heard it interpreted by the master finger of Mr. Henry Field (of Bath), we distrusted and miscomprehended it. All hail to thee, Henry Field!

"Boileau, who was the best satirist since the latest of the Romans, has some good lines, which we will venture to quote here:—

Soyez plutôt maçon, si c'est votre talent,
Ouvrier estimé, dans un art nécessaire
Qu'écivain commun; &c.

But the author of this essay does not come under the last denomination!"

I might ask, then, why quote the passage?—It has surely no relation to the matter, and is moreover one of the stupidest things ever said by Boileau—who, for a man of reputed wit, uttered more nonsense than enough—and, as a poet, was the most unpoetical who ever laid claim to the appellation. Mr. F. W. N. Bailey, in his "*Tale of a Tub*," says something considerably more to the purpose, but I cannot recall it—for, by some strange fatality, I could never yet manage to get by heart a line of that great poet's works. Mr. Augustine Wade, also, if I mistake not, mutters something to a similar purport, in one of his innumerable moonlight songs (Mr. Wade appears to have a remarkable passion for the co-incidence of love and moonlight) which being all *moonshine*, I did not commit to memory—for, by some singular and unaccountable predisposition, I could never learn moonshine by rote—and the versicles of Mr. Augustine Wade being all moonshine, it follows, that I could never remember them. However I am positively certain that both Mr. F. W. N. Bailey, and Mr. J. Augustine Wade, two of the most out of the way *literati* of the present day, have said something much more to the purpose than is conveyed by the feeble verses of Boileau. What for example, can be more stupid than this:—

Soyez plutôt maçon, si c'est votre talent.

If it be your talent! why—of course—what a stupid truism by way of maxim!

By the way, there are some capital verses on a "Sleeping Infant," in the last number of the "Illustrated London News" (a decided misnomer—"Illustrated London *stale jokes*" would be better) which, if they be not by one of the two astonishing poets I have cited, must be by *Vates*, the sporting prophet, or, Satan Montgomery. I have not enclosed them—as I am sure you have neither time nor space to bestow on them;—no paper but the "Illustrated London News" could, by any possibility have time or space for the insertion of such verses—but the Editors of that amusing "picture book," having little or nothing to do, can find time for any thing—and, being woefully

slack of interesting matter, have space for any thing. I am no great admirer of the "Essay on Chopin," which is extravagant in style and preposterous in its estimate of the merits of that composer, but I must confess that it is much less dull reading than the "Illustrated London News," which, by the way, is a fine satire on the frivolous taste of the times. Such a passage as that quoted, inflated as it is in many respects, would be a real *bonne bouche*—quite a "catch," indeed, for the purchaser of the "News." The clever editor who wrote the critique on the "Essay," has a decided knack at misquoting. He quotes Boileau inappositely, as I have shewn, and Goldsmith inaccurately, as I shall shew:—

Macpherson write bombast and call it a style—

—why, if Goldsmith ever wrote such a line as this, he deserved to have his ears pulled. Mr. Bailey and Mr. Wade, have written better lines, much better lines;—there are even better lines in the poem to a "Sleeping beauty," in the "Illustrated News."

In thy cadence down the vale.

is a much better line—at least much more musical (it smacks indeed of the *ballad* style—a ballad being composed of three *cadences*—a half cadence, a full cadence, and a flourish on the *point d'orgue*). Again—

I'll not wake

The slumbers of thy vermeil cheek,

is a better line, or rather line and a half, and tastes strongly of the "Tub,"—very tubbish indeed.

The slumbers of thy cheek—

You, see, Mr. Editor, even with omitting the expressively crimson adjective, it is still a good line—or at any rate better than that which the editor of the *News* (!) cites as Goldsmith's. Fie upon him!

Why not leave the poor devil of an essayist alone?—what can he have done to excite the "Illustrated" wrath? He has made himself sufficiently absurd in his essay without being cut into pieces by the apostrophizers of "tubs" and "moonshine." What is more—I am sure that the attack is *premeditated*—for the spirited publisher would be just as likely to send his *catalogue*, at once, for review, as a puff (to say the least of it) upon one of its principal features. All this fuss about nothing is unworthy so sublime a journal as the "Illustrated News," (whose purchasers might aptly be designated "Illustrated noodles") and such sublime editors as *Messieurs* of the Tub and Moonshine. If the Essay on Chopin be "verbosity and froth," (which I do not deny) what, in the name of teratology itself, are we to call the better portion of the "Illustrated London News?" Such a concoction of bad illustrations and worse prose I never encountered in my life, though I have read the "Tale of a Tub," and the lines on a "Sleeping Infant." Pray, Mr. Editor, give this a corner in your valuable journal. I know you are an enemy to humbug, and therefore rely on your kindness. Your frequent reader,

COSMOPOLITE.

REVIEW.

"Quadrilles from W. L. Phillips's musical drama, "The Swedish Ferryman"—VAL MORRIS, JUN., Esq.—Mori, Lavenue, & Co.

Val Morris, Jun., Esq. is lucky in finding good subjects for his quadrilles, and we must confess that he has not ill-treated them. These quadrilles have two advantages, viz., that of being danceable, and that of in no way approaching to the vulgar quality of the generality of such concoctions. We felicitate Val Morris, Jun., Esq.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the "Musical World."

SIR,—I am no professor of music, although a reader of your publication, but I am a professor of common sense—and as such I cannot allow the letter of your correspondent, who signs himself "A Lover of Counterpoint," to remain unanswered; for it is evident in his pitiful spirit of personal enmity, or more probably, professional envy of Mr. Flowers, (who proposes in a former number of your periodical that a new society should be formed, the test for admission to which, shall be "the composing a fugue of 150 bars, with the subject in every bar,) he has lost sight of the subject, for he either foolishly or wilfully says, "however, if the 150 bar fugue, with the subject 150 times in each bar be insisted on, &c. &c." Whereas Mr. Flowers' suggestion was "a fugue of 150 bars, with the subject in each bar," not the subject 150 times in every bar. I hope your readers will infer from this, as I have, that the writer of such nonsense must either be afraid of never gaining admission to a society where such a test is required, or he must have had an unconquerable desire to vent his ill-feeling against Mr. Flowers individually, neither of which can be creditable to him, particularly under an assumed name.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
Connaught Terrace, J. B. BROWN.
Hyde Park.

PROFESSIONALS AND AMATEURS.

The following letter has appeared in the columns of the *Times*. We are glad to give it insertion.

To the Editor of the *Times*.

SIR,—I am a member of the musical profession, and have a large family to provide for. I received an expensive education to qualify myself for my pursuit; and, directing my time and energies exclusively to it, I have no other means of subsistence. My income (chiefly derived from my engagement in a theatrical orchestra) is barely sufficient to maintain my family in that respectability to which they have been accustomed. The musical festivals held periodically in the large towns, are looked forward to with anxiety by musical men, as affording them an engagement, and putting a few extra pounds in their pockets beyond their customary and inadequate sources of income. I have been engaged upwards of nine years at the Birmingham Festival, but this time I was informed that my vacancy was filled up. Now, of course, if any of my brother professors had been considered better qualified than myself, however much I might regret it, I could have no grounds for complaint. But, Sir, I find it stated, in a Musical Journal, last Saturday, that my place, and that of others of my colleagues, is supplied by the "second partner in an eminent brewery firm, his son, and a well-known solicitor residing in London;" these wealthy gentlemen, I have since ascertained, have not only taken our places (which alone is a grievous hardship) but also receive the stipends which of right belong to the poor professors. These instances, Sir, are not the only ones in which, through the cupidity of conductors of festivals, numbers of qualified professors are superseded by affluent amateurs, who either receive payment for their services, or, more generally, slip their salaries into the pockets of those by whom they are engaged. I privately enclose you my card, as an authentication of my statement, but as I do not wish my name to appear, I beg you will allow me publicly to subscribe myself,

Sir, your obliged and humble servant,
MUSICUS.

ERNST AND SIVORI.

SIGNOR SIVORI has once more addressed M. ERNST in the columns of a cotemporary. The following is his letter:—

To the Editor of the "Musical Examiner."

THE LAST WORDS OF CAMILLO SIVORI TO M. ERNST.

Mr. Editor,—Contrary to what I had expected, M. Ernst has once more laid me under the necessity of replying to him. Pray then give insertion to this letter as to the one which provoked it, and believe that it is with unfeigned regret that I find myself once more forced to appeal to your kindness—but I will not abuse it.

Indeed I have merely to state to M. Ernst, the most simple and veritable of facts; viz., that the intentions and the feelings of which he accuses me, are too much opposed to my own sentiments and those of my family, for me to occupy myself with them, much less for them to cause me any concern.

Emulation is a noble struggle, the only one I understand, the only one I think worthy of men who respect themselves, and in which alone I ought to, and will engage with my brother artist. There, at least, our competent and impartial judges and spectators of our efforts will be able to pronounce between us, and whatever may be their decision, M. Ernst, better advised than he appears to have been, will doubtless owe me good-will for the manner in which I have behaved to him.

Moreover, no one knows better than M. Ernst that, in all I have said or written, I have ever rendered the sincerest homage to *truth*, that my third letter was addressed to him with the least possible delay, since M. Ernst quitted London immediately after the publication of my so called second letter—and should have published it as it was written, and as he was engaged, to do as a point of honour.

As to our individual modes of attacking the difficulties of the greatest masters, I think I may say that it is not for my brother artist, whatever opinion he may hold, to constitute himself, as he has done, the judge thereof. So much the better, if M. Ernst be my superior, as he seems to think; but, once more I say, THE PUBLIC alone has the right to decide and publish its decision. Receive Mr. Editor, my earnest salutations.

Liverpool, Sept. 4, 1843. CAMILLO SIVORI.

We wish to take neither side of the question, but must confess that we perceive no answer to M. Ernst's last letter in the above—indeed we are at a loss to premise *what* is its intention.

MISCELLANEOUS.

ENGLISH GOLD AND FOREIGN BRASS.

THE following extract is as honest as it is true. It is written by Monsieur HENRI BLANCHARD, in the *Gazette Musicale*:—

"Are you aware" he asks, "that the Italian singers, the French and German instrumentalists, visit your shores solely for the purpose of exercising that spirit of commerce which presides over everything with you, and not to ask for the opinion of Englishmen on the subject of art? They come to make amends in Paris, as they all say, for the trading system they have been carrying on in England, and to spend the money which they have earned with so much *ennui*."

Punch begs to lay the above on the reading-desk of his gracious mistress the Queen, and humbly prays that her Majesty will mercifully consider the condition of the French, German, and Italian *ennuyés*—and dispense for the future with their services.—*Punch*.

SIVORI, with Gallinari, Miss S. Novello, Miss Lucombe, and John Parry, will give concerts in the principal towns in the north of England, during October.

BLAGROVE, Lindley, and the Misses Williams will make a tour, commencing early in November.

BALFE, and his *cara sposa*, gave a concert last week at Boulogne, en route, we conclude, to Paris.

SIVORI is gone to Birmingham, merely, it is said, as a listener; but it strikes us, that we shall hear of his giving the Birmingham folks a touch of his talents on the violin.

DEATH OF SIGNOR MARIOTTI.—This celebrated performer on the trombone died lately, at the great age of eighty-six. He was the first performer on his instrument for many years at the Opera House, Ancient, and Philharmonic concerts. The directors of the last two establishments continued to pay him his salary, although he had for many years been unable to fulfil his duty in the orchestra; and the Royal Society of Musicians frequently granted him pecuniary aid, although he was not a member of it.

THEATRE ROYAL DRURY LANE.—The season will commence on Saturday next with Mr. Balfe's popular opera *The Siege of Rochelle*, and the last new ballet of the *Académie Royale de Musique* in Paris—*La Péri*. Mr. Bunn has put forth a very strong programme of the arrangements for the season, by which it appears that he rests his faith entirely on opera and ballet—he promises several works new to the English stage by the most received German, Italian, and French composers—a new opera by Mr. Balfe, and one by Mr. Benedict.

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.—Mr. Wallack will commence his first managerial campaign on Monday next. The theatre will open with a Five Act new Play by Mr. Bourcicault.

THE LATE MR. J. T. HAINES.—The widow of this highly popular dramatic author, who is left in very great pecuniary difficulties by his sudden demise, which took place some few months since, has announced a performance for her benefit at the Surrey Theatre on Wednesday next. For this occasion besides Mr. T. P. Cooke, several other distinguished members of the dramatic and musical professions, have also liberally offered their gratuitous services, including the names of Mr. Buckstone, Mr. Strickland, Mr. Brindal, Mr. Worrell, Mrs. Stanley, Mr. Tom Matthews, Mr. Clement White, Mr. Gilbert, Miss Ballin, &c., and Messrs. Wallack, Webster and Maddox, their respective managers, have most kindly given consent for their appearance. Mr. Haines was the author of the libretto of Mr. Rooke's opera of *Amilie*, or *the Love test*, of the nautical drama of *My Poll and my Partner Joe*,

and of very many other highly successful dramatic pieces. His writings were the making of the late Mr. Davidge's fortune at the Surrey Theatre. Mrs. Haines has a strong claim on the sympathies of the public, she puts forth a good bill of fare, and we have little doubt but that her house will prove a bumper.

SIVORI, accompanied by Miss S. Novello, Miss Lucombe, Gallinari, and John Parry, will commence a professional tour on Monday next. Among the places at which they will give concerts, will be Chester, Liverpool, Manchester, York, Bolton, Buxton, Sheffield, Hull, Leeds, Birmingham, Leamington, Bristol, Exeter, Plymouth, &c. &c.

CONCERTS were given last week, with the greatest success, at Bath, Bristol, and Clifton. The principal performers being, Madame Grisi, Brizzi, Pilotti, John Parry, Patten (flute), and Cooper (violin.)

MR. KIALLMARK and Mr. Grattan Cooke gave another very interesting concert, last night, at the "Literary Institution," Gravesend, which was very respectfully attended. The programme was excellent, and contained vocal and instrumental *morceaux* of first-rate quality. The performances of Mr. Kiallmark (on the piano), of Mr. Grattan Cooke (on the oboe), and of Mr. Frederick Chatterton (on the harp), gave universal satisfaction. The vocalists all exerted themselves most efficiently. They were the Misses A. and M. Williams, Marcus, and Steele—Messrs. Handel Gear and Stretton. We trust, and in fact believe, that the speculation has been profitable, and will induce a taste hereafter, in Gravesend, for concerts.

THE PRINCES' THEATRE, OXFORD STREET, will open on Monday, October 9, with Mr. Balfe's *Geraldine*. Mr. Maddox's first Italian adaptation of the season will be the *Don Pasquale* of Donizetti. The hero, in which *role* Signor Lablache is so much spoken of, will be supported by

MR. PAUL!! BEDFORD!!! who has so highly distinguished himself by his "Nix-my-dollities" and "Jolly-nosinesses."

To Our Subscribers.

*** The necessity of preventing confusion in the making up of our accounts, and the convenience of our subscribers as well as ourselves, compels us respectfully to state to all those whose accounts have been supplied to them, that unless their subscriptions, up to Christmas, are paid by Tuesday the 10th of October, we shall be obliged to discontinue sending their copies of the MUSICAL WORLD, until such subscriptions be received. We trust that this will cause no offence to any of our kind subscribers—who, if they be in business themselves, must be well aware of the necessity of avoiding all confusion in accounts.

Notice to Correspondents.

*** In answer to numerous enquiries, it is respectfully stated that the subscription to the "MUSICAL WORLD" is 16s. per Annum, or 4s. quarterly, which ensures the delivery in every part of England, Ireland, Scotland, France, and Belgium, by the first post after Thursday—the terms for America are 25s. per annum, the Numbers being forwarded by the Post-office Mails on the 14th and 28th of each month. Single copies may be obtained by remitting the amount either in coin or postage stamps, to Mr. R. Groombridge, Paternoster-row, or to Mr. E. B. Taylor, at the Office.

All letters and parcels for the Editor should be addressed to him at the "MUSICAL WORLD" Office, 3, Coventry-street, Haymarket. Matters relating to the current week should be forwarded on or before Tuesday.

BIRMINGHAM.—We shall be very happy, for mutual convenience, to exchange with the proprietors of any of the Birmingham Papers.

J. CHURCHILL.—We have enclosed his letter to Mr. Hullah; as soon as we receive an answer, our correspondent shall be apprised of it.

MR. BRAHAM, MR. BLACKBURN, MR. TREAKELL, MR. F. BATES, MR. T. WOOLLEY, their subscriptions are acknowledged with thanks.

F. W. WINDSOR.—His request will be attended to.

FLUEBERG.—Henri Blanchard is not the proprietor, but only one of the editors of a paper called "*La Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris*," which belongs to and is published by Maurice Schlesinger, Music Vender and Publisher, 97, Rue Richelieu, Paris. It can be procured in England through any foreign book or music-seller.

Mrs. DAVIES.—Her request has been attended to.

LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

FOUR HANDS.	
Schwencke's 6 Divertissements	Ewer & Co.
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